

Geographic Review Panel 3 – American River/Eastside Tribes

Proposal number: 2001-H211 **Short Proposal Title:** Willow Slough Watershed Stewardship

1. Applicability to CALFED ERP Goals and Implementation Plan and CVPIA priorities, and relevance to ERP and CVPIA priorities for your region. The proposed project has direct application to CALFED ERP goals 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, and uncertainty 12 (beyond the riparian corridor/agricultural conservation and wildlife friendly farming practices), and CVPIA priorities, particularly (a) and (f). The project will test or evaluate a total of 36 hypotheses.

2. Linkages/coordination with previously funded projects or other restoration activities in your region. Potentially broad. There is a link with the first phase of this project. There is also a tie to another project 2001-G207, Sustaining Agriculture and Wildlife Beyond the Riparian Corridor, and its first phase.

3. Feasibility, especially the project's ability to move forward in a timely and successful manner. Yes. The project applicant has assembled a project team with broad and appropriate experience, and has an established and cooperative relationship with participating landowners.

4. Qualifications of the applicants and others involved in implementing the proposed project. Audobon has put together a well qualified and diverse team of folks.

5. Local involvement (including environmental compliance). Local involvement is broad and well defined.

Environmental compliance is not addressed, and some of the restoration actions may require CEQA/NEPA consultation. It may be that the proposed project is covered under permits acquired for the previously funded work.

6. Cost. \$1,800,000.00, for an extensive, multi-year, demonstration projects. The budget seems reasonable given the proposed scope of work. However, given the strong financial match and the detailed task breakdown, all components appear worthy of funding.

7. Cost sharing. There is cost share contributions from 14 entities

8. Additional comments. There is considerable overlap and remarkable similarity between this proposal and G207, Sustaining Agriculture and Wildlife Beyond the Riparian Corridor submitted by the Yolo County Resources Conservation District. For example, the conceptual models are identical. Both projects identified that they were the next phase of the same project. Cooperation is great but this overlap is either duplication or overkill. There must be an effort to meld the two projects into one project, or break out any apparent overlap from either project.

Only one of these projects should be funded given the high cost associated with the work in relation to the relatively low importance of the area in which the work is being done.

Regional Ranking

Panel Ranking: Medium high

Provide a brief explanation of your ranking: This is a project mainly for wildlife, mostly for birds and for restoring grasslands and small channels thereby reducing erosion and reduce silting of downstream areas. This is a multi-faceted education effort of the folks of the Willow Creek watershed.

The proposed project is well developed, realistic, and a highly qualified team of specialists skilled in science and agricultural landowner outreach has been assembled. The proposed approach has high potential applicability throughout the region, but would be conducted in a low priority watershed.

Recommend that the proposal be funded contingent upon elimination of duplication with G207, and demonstration that consideration has been given to the necessity of state and federal environmental permits and/or consultations and that, where necessary, the permits and consultations have been or will be acquired.